



NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: CAPT. MARK WELCH
FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL
(850) 617-2301

FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL STEPS UP ENFORCEMENT THIS WEEKEND

~ Heightened enforcement will reduce crashes, save lives ~

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – The Florida Highway Patrol will be out in full force during the Memorial Day holiday weekend, which begins Friday morning and extends through midnight, May 31.

“We expect traffic to increase across the state during the long holiday weekend,” said Colonel John T. Czernis, FHP director. “The Florida Highway Patrol will employ all available resources to enforce Florida’s traffic laws and to remind drivers to slow down and buckle up. No one wants their weekend, much less their life, ruined by a crash.”

All uniformed FHP personnel, including those normally assigned to administrative duties, will patrol interstates and other major state roads throughout the four-day holiday period. FHP Auxiliary and Reserve troopers will volunteer to augment the Patrol’s forces during the holiday enforcement period, too. The strategy aims to increase the Patrol’s presence throughout Florida in an effort to deter traffic violations and to enhance services to motorists who break down while traveling or who need other assistance. Please remember to dial **FHP* (*347) from your cell phone to contact FHP to report an aggressive driver or to request roadside assistance.

During this holiday weekend, the FHP is participating in three distinct traffic education and enforcement initiatives: *Operation C.A.R.E.* - a Combined Accident Reduction Effort, involving all 50 state police and highway patrol organizations across the United States; *Take Back Our Highways*, a multi-state effort involving the Highway Patrol from Alabama and its neighboring states; and the highly publicized *Click It or Ticket* program. All three campaigns focus on saving lives, preventing injuries, and mitigating property damage associated with traffic crashes.

The Patrol reminds motorists that Florida’s primary safety belt law authorizes law enforcement officers to stop and cite motorists solely for failure to buckle up. In 2008, 1,785 people in safety belt equipped vehicles died in crashes in Florida. Sixty percent failed to buckle up. To bring awareness to the law, Gov. Charlie Crist proclaimed May 2010 *Florida Safety Belt Awareness Month*.

The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles provides highway safety and security through excellence in service, education and enforcement. The Department is leading the way to a safer Florida through the efficient and professional execution of its core mission: the issuance of driver licenses, vehicle tags and titles and operation of the Florida Highway Patrol. To learn more about DHSMV and the services offered, visit www.flhsmv.gov.

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